

COLUMBIA BASIN TRUST PROVIDES SUPPORT FOR COVID-19 IMPACTS

The Trust will provide the following immediate support:

Small business

To help small business in the Basin, the Trust will:

- provide low interest working capital loans to help businesses meet immediate needs or plan for future recovery
- increase the support available through the Impact Investment Fund
- waive fees for Basin RevUp
- provide increased wage subsidy support through Summer Works and the Career Internship Program
- increase the resources available through Basin Business Advisors and Training Fee Support.

Vulnerable populations

The Trust will support community organizations that provide direct services to those most vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19 and those organizations that are helping Basin residents meet their basic needs. This includes funding for First Nations communities, Métis associations, food banks, community social service agencies, child care operators, housing societies, and hospices in the Basin.

The Trust will provide funds to the above organizations for:

- capital renovations and purchases to modify and adapt physical space to COVID-19 service delivery requirements (this includes renovations such as: secondary entrance, plexi-glass shields, hand washing stations and other physical modifications)
- new or enhanced service delivery expenses to help residents, such as: remote service delivery, COVID-related counselling and support, transportation costs, food vouchers, food delivery and cleaning supplies
- workplace adaptation expenses to support remote working and ensure service delivery can continue (e.g. laptops, phones, remote working software subscriptions), as well as technology and subscription purchases for clients who demonstrate financial need and require technology to access services or education/training
- loss of revenue and expenses resulting from closures, cancelled services or programs, bans on community gatherings, and other financial disruptions due to COVID-19.

Other Measures Being Taken

To continue to support the region while meeting public health requirements, the Trust has:

- postponed its public engagement process to renew its strategic plan
- closed each Trust office to the public and ensured staff can work remotely to support communities and residents
- communicated with the people and organizations it works with about support like the following:
 - enabling grant recipients to be flexible on reporting requirements, while ensuring the Trust still provides payments as usual
 - extending program deadlines to allow more time for community organizations to respond
 - helping program partners explore ways to engage virtually
 - providing a loan payment holiday to investment and economic development clients and being open to discussing other changes to existing arrangements

- offering internet customers of the Trust's Columbia Basin Broadband Corporation a free increase in bandwidth in recognition of temporarily increased connectivity needs
- increasing resources available through the Non-Profit Advisors Program to ensure non-profits can access guidance to address operational and organizational challenges arising from COVID-19.

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